

163

VENOM



ROBSON
MO!

BUNN
SALAZAR
ANINDITO
ALMARA

ROBSON
MO!

YEARS AGO, PETER PARKER (A.K.A. THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN) ACCIDENTALLY BONDED WITH AN ALIEN BEING CALLED A SYMBIOTE. WHEN PETER REALIZED THE COSTUME WAS ACTUALLY AN AGGRESSIVE LIVING ORGANISM, HE REJECTED IT. BUT DURING THEIR TIME TOGETHER, THE SYMBIOTE HAD ACCESS TO SPIDER-MAN'S GENETIC CODE AND NOW GRANTS WHOMEVER IT BONDS WITH SKILLS SIMILAR TO HIS: WALL-CRAWLING, THE POWER TO GENERATE BIOORGANIC WEBBING AND UNIQUE ABILITIES TO SHAPE-SHIFT AND BECOME INVISIBLE, TURNING THEM INTO...



VENOM



POISON-X CONCLUSION

AFTER **CYCLOPS'** FATHER--THE INTERSTELLAR ADVENTURER **CORSAIR**--AND HIS CREW WERE KIDNAPPED BY A GANG OF SYMBIOTE-SUITED MERCENARIES LED BY **KILLER THRILL**, THE **X-MEN** ABDUCTED VENOM TO HELP SAVE HIM.

VENOM AND THE X-MEN CONFRONTED THE ARMS DEALER **HAZE MANCER**, WHO HAD SOLD THE SYMBIOTES TO THRILL'S GANG. IN THE ENSUING STRUGGLE, THE X-MEN WERE BONDED TO KLYNTAR OF THEIR OWN AND DEFEATED THE SYMBIOTE SLAVER!

USING MANCER'S SYMBIOTE TRACER TECH, THE X-MEN LOCATED THE STARJAMMERS AND LAUNCHED AN ALL-OUT ASSAULT ON KILLER THRILL AND HER GANG. MEANWHILE, AN OLD THREAT, ONE WITH A DANGEROUS INTEREST IN THE KLYNTAR, HAS RETURNED. THE **POISONS** HAVE INVADDED THE UNIVERSE...AND JEAN GREY AND KILLER THRILL WERE THEIR FIRST VICTIMS!

*NOTE: THE EVENTS IN THIS ISSUE TAKE PLACE AFTER **X-MEN BLUE #22**. IF YOU HAVEN'T READ IT, PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK.*

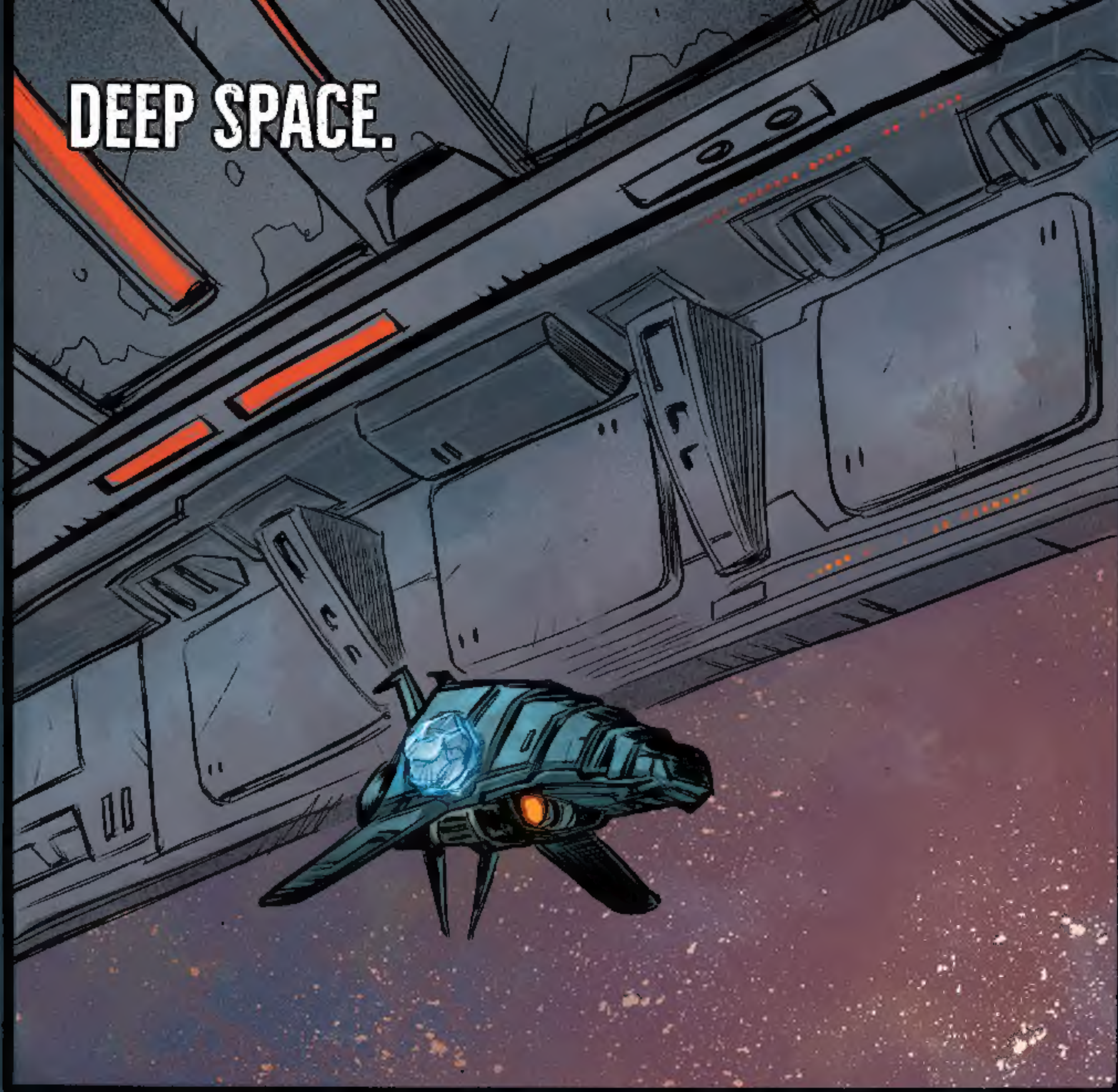
CULLEN BUNN WRITER	EDGAR SALAZAR & ARIO ANINDITO ARTISTS	ALLEN MARTINEZ INKER	DONO SÁNCHEZ-ALMARA COLORIST	VC'S CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER	WILL ROBSON & MORRY HOLLOWELL COVER ARTISTS
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DEEP SPACE.



JEAN?

JEAN--
WHERE ARE
YOU?

WHY
CAN'T I HEAR
YOU?



SOMETHING'S
OFF.

I'D EXPECT
THIS SHIP TO BE
CRAWLING WITH
PIRATES.

PIRATES
OTHER THAN US,
THAT IS.



WHAT
DO YOU THINK,
SON?

MAYBE
THE OTHER
X-MEN CLEANED
HOUSE--

NOT NOW,
CORSAIR.

CAN
YOU NOT
SEE?



HE'S
WORRIED.



I'M
SORRY,
SCOTT.

THE BEST
OF FATHERS MESS
UP SOMETIMES, AND I'M
FAR FROM THE BEST. I SAY
STUPID THINGS MORE
OFTEN THAN I'D
LIKE.

BUT
JEAN, SHE'S AS
TOUGH AS THEY
COME.



"I'M SURE SHE'S FINE."

I'VE KNOWN THE X-MEN A LONG TIME.

THERE'S NO SENSE IN TRYING TO TALK TO THEM.

THEY WILL NOT **WILLINGLY** ACCEPT WHAT WE ARE OFFERING.



IS THAT... JEAN?

NO, KID.
NO, IT'S NOT.
NOT ANYMORE.



SHE'S A **POISON** NOW.

EDDIE AND I FACED POISONS BEFORE.

THEY **TERRIFY** US.



A...POISON? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

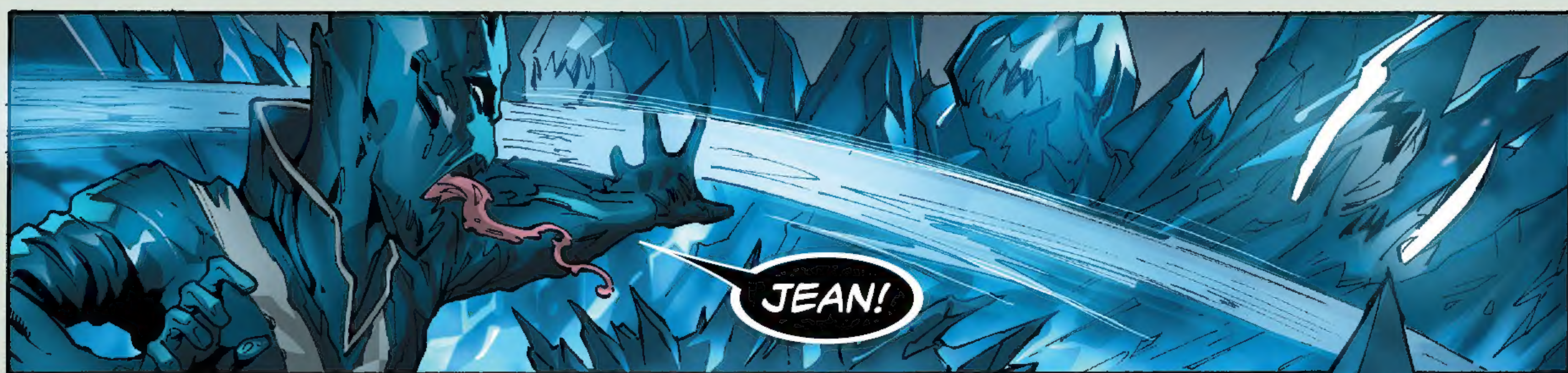
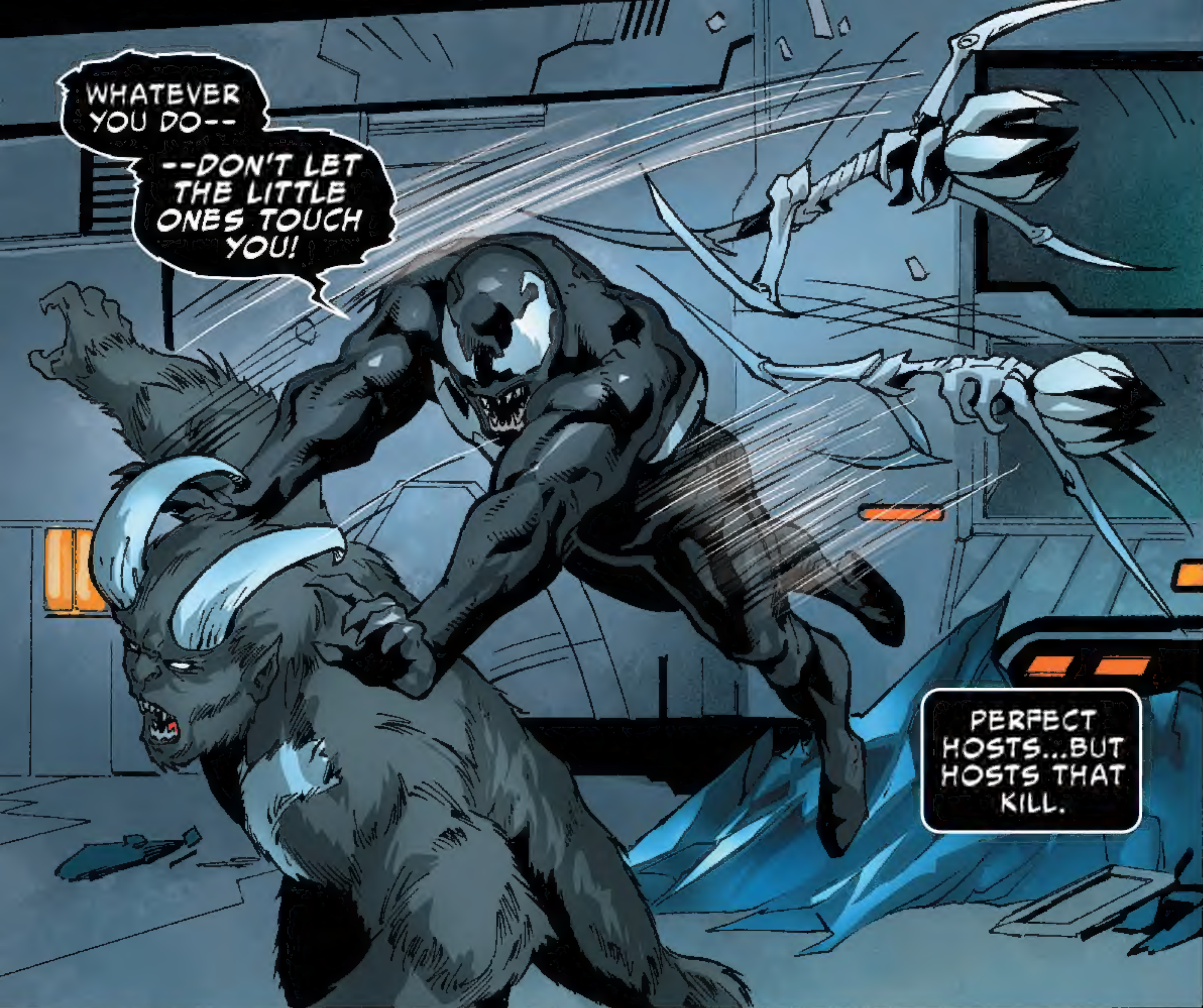
IT MEANS YOU SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN RID OF THOSE SYMBIOTES WHEN I TOLD YOU TO.

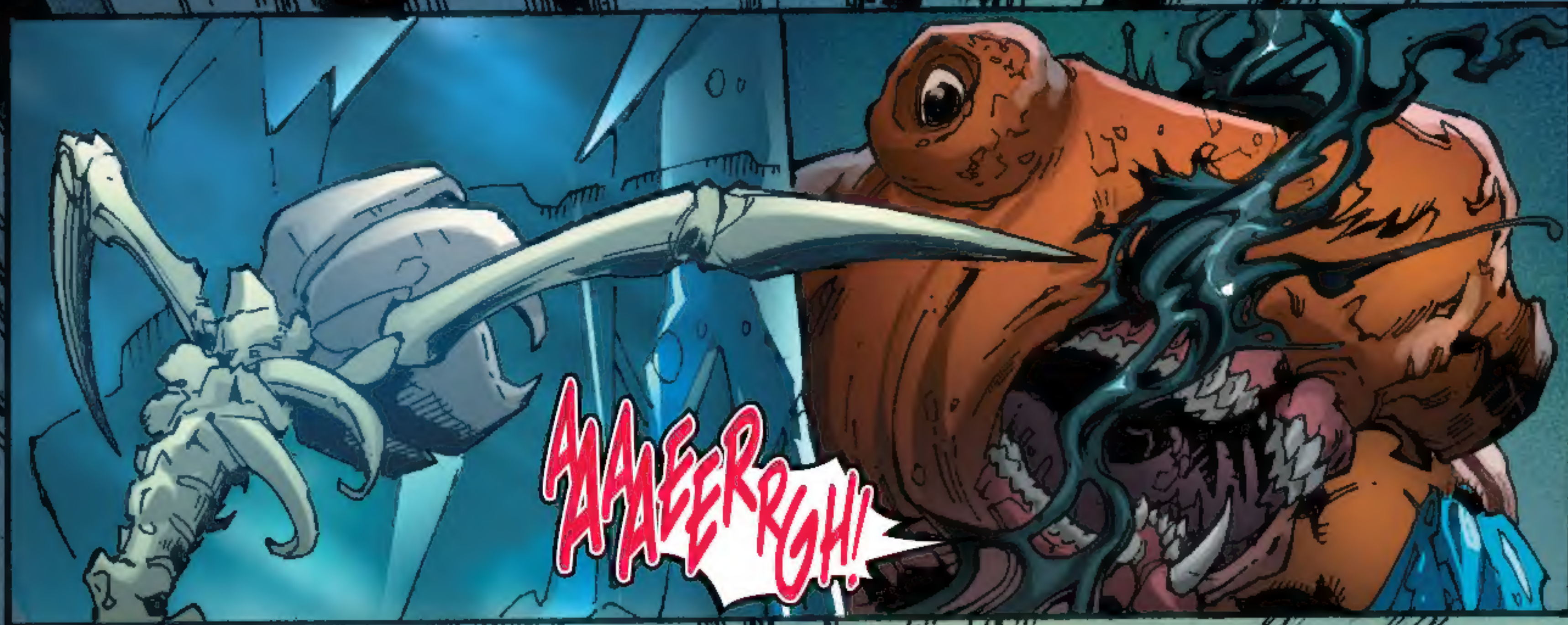
IT MEANS WE'RE SCREWED-- ROYALLY.

IT MEANS WE SHOULD BE RUNNING.



TAKE THEM.





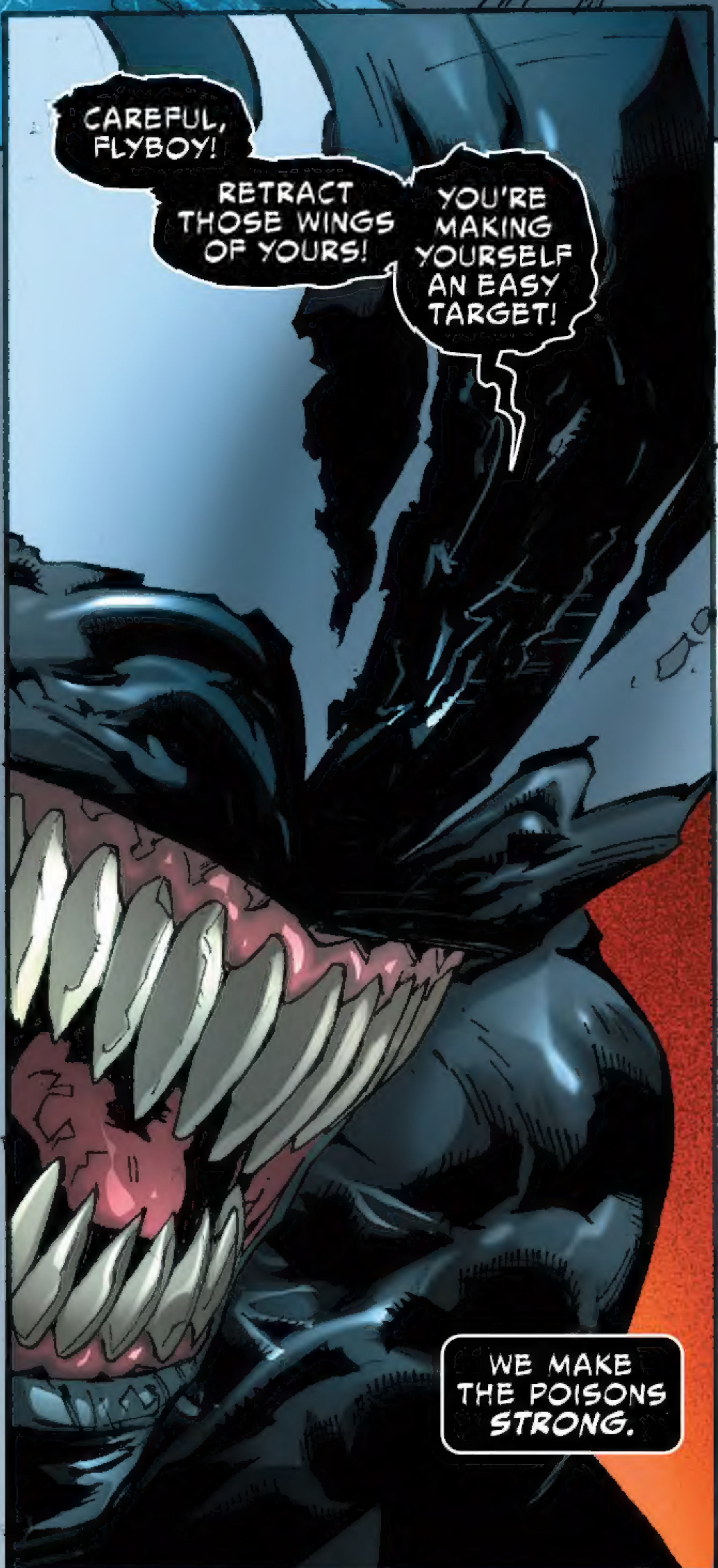
AAAAEERGH!



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH JEAN?

LET HER GO!

LET HER GO OR I SWEAR--



CAREFUL, FLYBOY!

RETRACT THOSE WINGS OF YOURS!

YOU'RE MAKING YOURSELF AN EASY TARGET!

WE MAKE THE POISONS STRONG.



IN RETURN, THEY SILENCE US.



IF...

...IF I CAN'T USE MY WINGS...

...WHAT GOOD AM I?



THE POISONS
MAKE EDDIE
DOUBT ME.

DOUBT
OUR
BOND.

THOSE
DAMN SYMBIOTES
AREN'T POWER-UPS
ANYMORE!

THEY'RE
LIABILITIES!



FOR NOW,
MAYBE.

BUT ONCE
WE'VE TAKEN YOUR
SYMBIOTES...ONCE THE
METASTASIZATION
IS COMPLETE...

...YOU'LL BE
PURGED OF ALL
WEAKNESS.

YOU'LL
BE MADE
PERFECT.



UNNH!

SHE'S
GRABBED
US IN A TK
FIELD!

CAN'T
BREAK
FREE!

FREEDOM
IS AN AWFUL LIE.
YOU'LL SEE WHEN
YOU JOIN THE
HIVE.



THIS
IS BAD,
RIGHT?

I MEAN,
THIS IS JUST
ABOUT AS BAD
AS IT GETS,
ISN'T IT?



ZRAAAAK



JEAN?

WHAT HAVE
THEY DONE TO
YOU?

THEY
MADE ME
BETTER.

YOU ARE
ONE OF THE
SURVIVORS...ONE
OF THE VENOM
HOSTS...

...BEFORE WE
REALIZED THERE
WERE SO MANY OTHER
SYMBIOTES TO
CONSUME...

...SO
MANY OTHER
WORLDS...

EDDIE IS
ANGRY.

ANGRY
BECAUSE HE
IS AFRAID.

GET AWAY FROM
HIM, JEAN!

I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS...
I REALLY AM...BUT YOU
NEED TO JUST STEP
THE HELL BACK!

KRAK

SHRAKT

SHACK

SHRAKT

WELCOME TO
THE WINNING TEAM,
MY DARLINGS.

NOW...
GET ON YOUR
FEET AND GO DO
MAMA'S DIRTY
WORK.

WHY...
WHY CAN'T
WE HEAR EACH
OTHER'S
THOUGHTS?

ONCE YOU'VE
JOINED US,
SCOTT, OUR MINDS
WILL BE MORE
CONNECTED
THAN EVER.

WE'LL
BE AS
ONE.



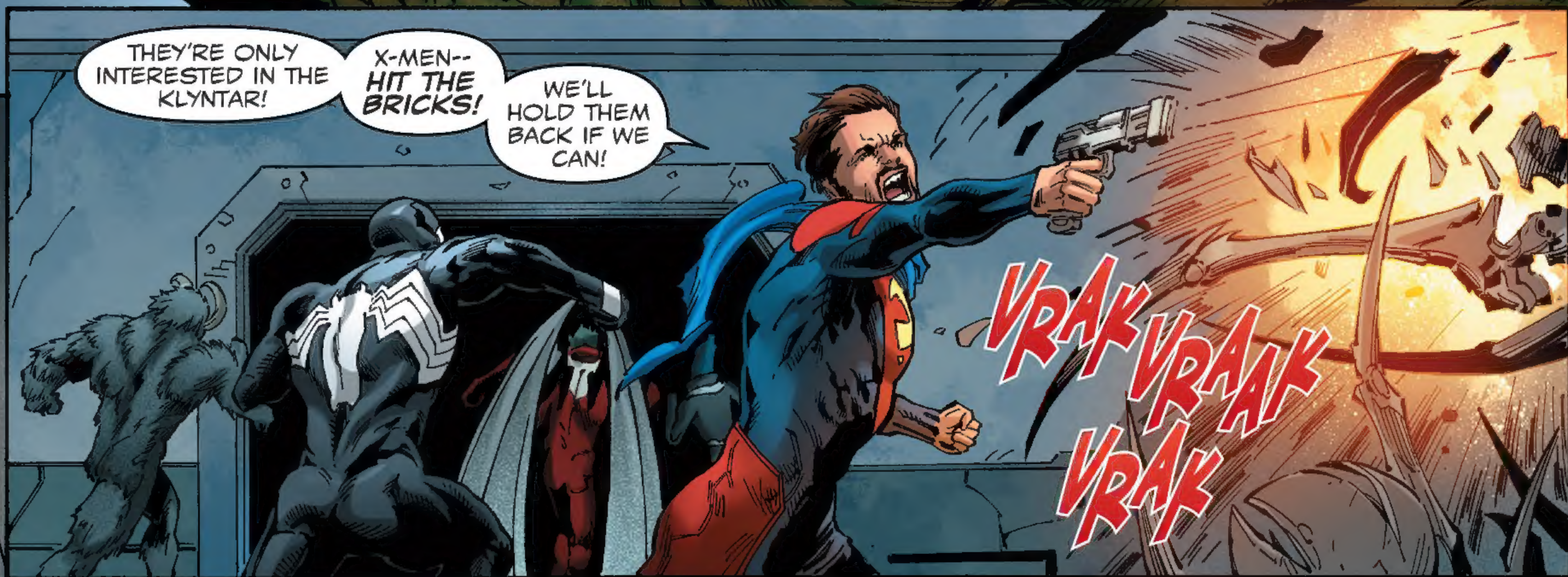
YOU...
YOU ARE
USELESS TO
US NOW!

THE HIVE
HAS NO NEED FOR
BOUNTIES. NO PRICE
UPON YOUR
HEADS!

ABANDON
THIS FIGHT
AND YOU MIGHT
LIVE A WHILE
LONGER!

SORRY,
FRIEND.

THE
STARJAMMERS
DON'T TURN THEIR
BACKS ON FRIENDS...
OR ENEMIES.



THEY'RE ONLY
INTERESTED IN THE
KLYNTAR!

X-MEN--
HIT THE
BRICKS!

WE'LL
HOLD THEM
BACK IF WE
CAN!

VRAK
VRAK
VRAK



WAIT!

WE CAN'T
JUST LEAVE
JEAN!

SHE
NEEDS
US!

COME
ON, KID!

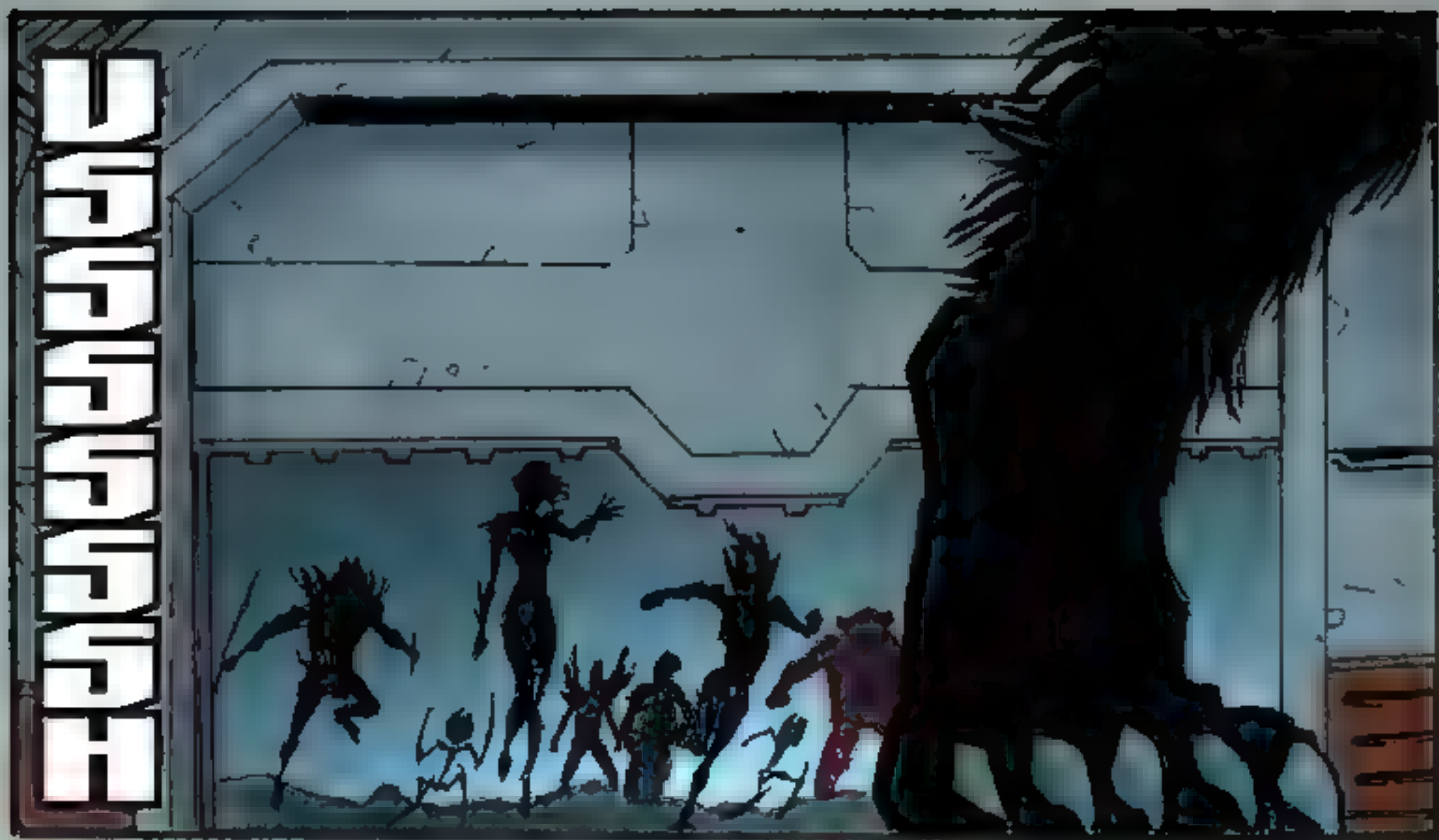


GO!

I'M
RIGHT BEHIND
YOU!



I'LL
GET THE
DOOR.





"DANGER IS ON THE WAY."

WE'LL NEED A DOORWAY, BOBBY...

...AND A CAUSEWAY, IF YOU DON'T MIND.

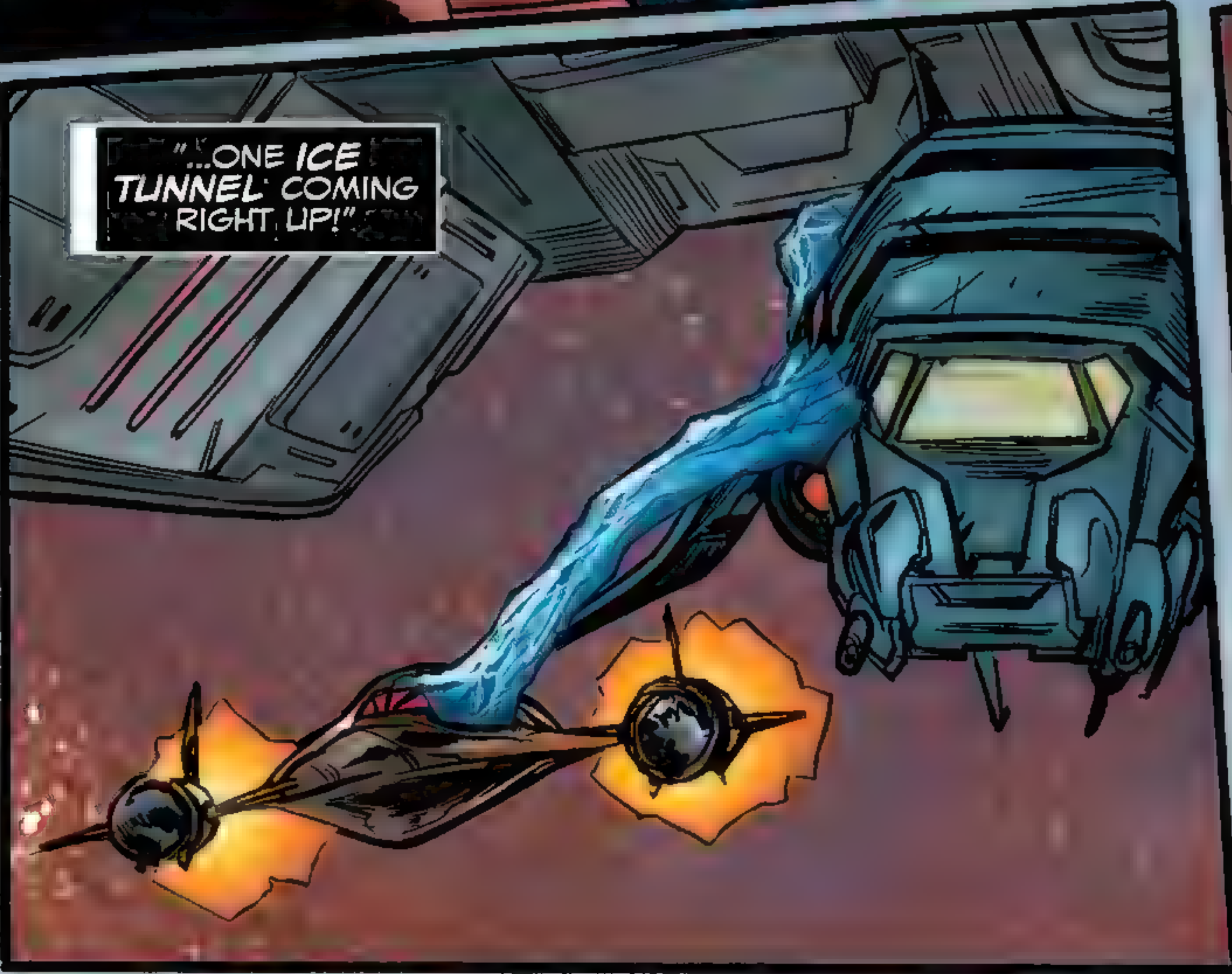
ON IT.



IF THIS BLOWS UP IN MY FACE, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A REAL DEPRESSURIZATION PROBLEM.

SO EVERYBODY BE READY TO GRAB ONTO SOMETHING.

BUT IF IT WORKS...



"...ONE ICE TUNNEL COMING RIGHT UP!"



THIS WAY, KIDS!

YOU MUST BE AT LEAST **THIS** TALL TO RIDE THIS RIDE!



THAT'S
CLUTE.

YOU GUYS
JUST LOST ONE
OF YOUR TEAMMATES,
BUT YOU HAVEN'T LOST
YOUR SENSE OF
HUMOR.



J-JEAN?

I
DIDN'T MEAN
ANYTHING.

I MEAN...
YOU'RE AN
X-MAN.

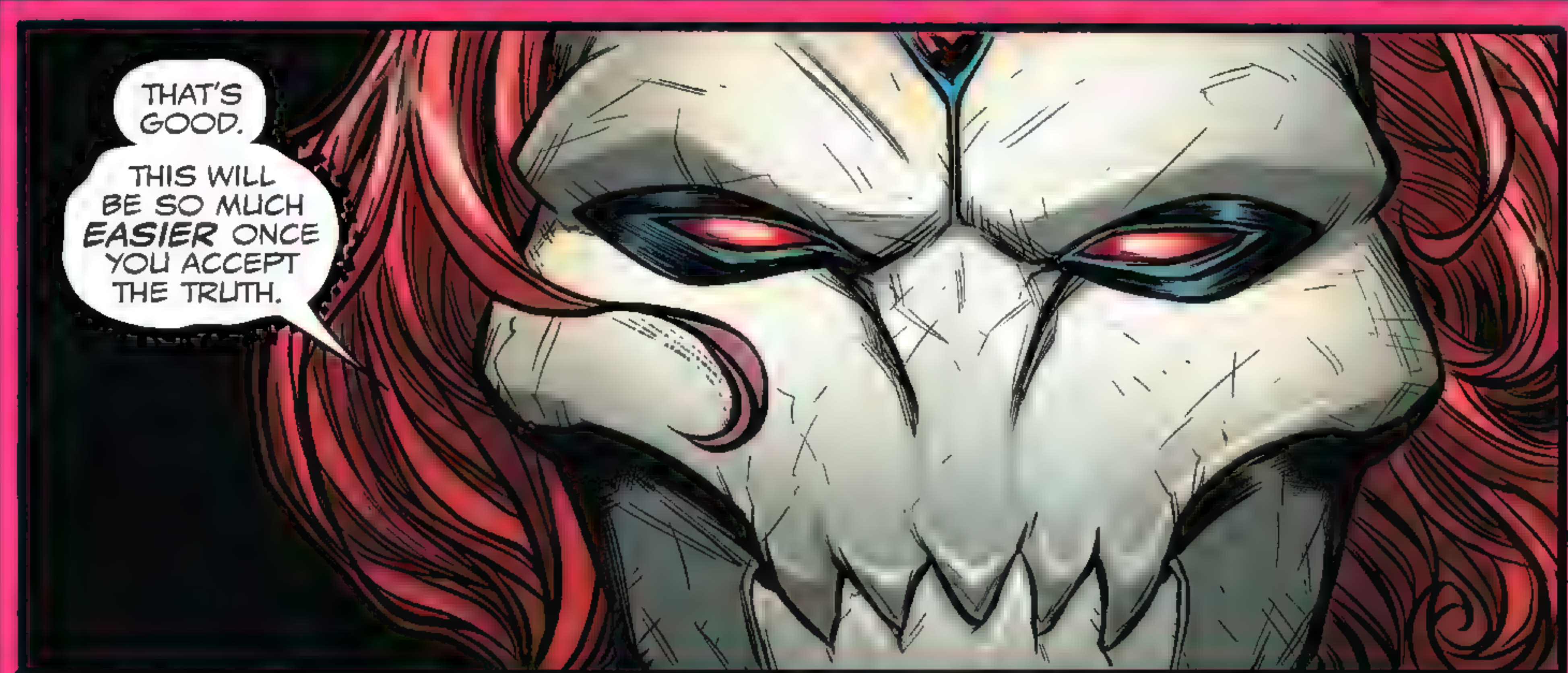
YOU'LL
MAKE IT PAST
THIS--



NO.

SHE
WON'T.

SHE'S
ALREADY
GONE.



THAT'S
GOOD.

THIS WILL
BE SO MUCH
EASIER ONCE
YOU ACCEPT
THE TRUTH.



WE FIGHT.

NOT ME.

I FIGHT BECAUSE I MUST.

EDDIE DOES WHAT HE ALWAYS DOES. FIGHTS TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT. THE CHILDREN.

BUT THIS TIME, WE DON'T FIGHT FOR REVENGE.

I FIGHT TO SURVIVE.



EVERYONE WITHOUT A SYMBIOTE--GET CLEAR!

THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU!

GET TO THE SHIP!



NOW OR NEVER, EH, HEPZIBAH?

WITH YOU, IT ALWAYS IS.



AW, SCOTT. LET'S NOT ARGUE.

THAT'S... THAT'S NOT JEAN TALKING. YOU'RE NOT JEAN.

WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO CONVINCE?



THE SYMBIOTES CAN ADAPT TO DEEP SPACE! THE POISONS WON'T LET US MAKE IT THROUGH THAT TUNNEL!

BUT WHO GIVES A DAMN!



HUSTLE, JAMMERS!

I THINK I KNOW WHAT THE X-MEN ARE PLANNING.

WE WANT TO BE ON THAT SHIP BEFORE IT HAPPENS.

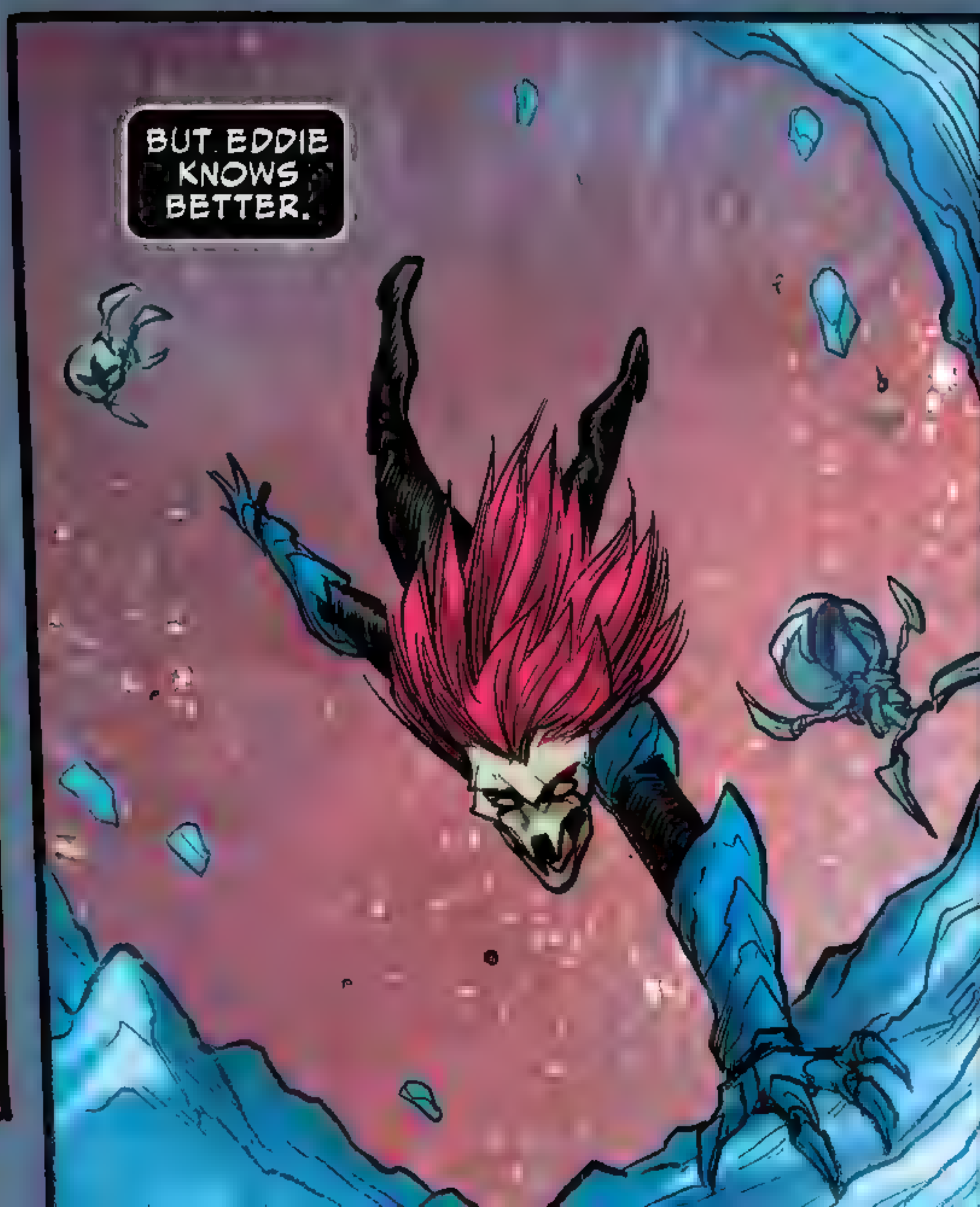
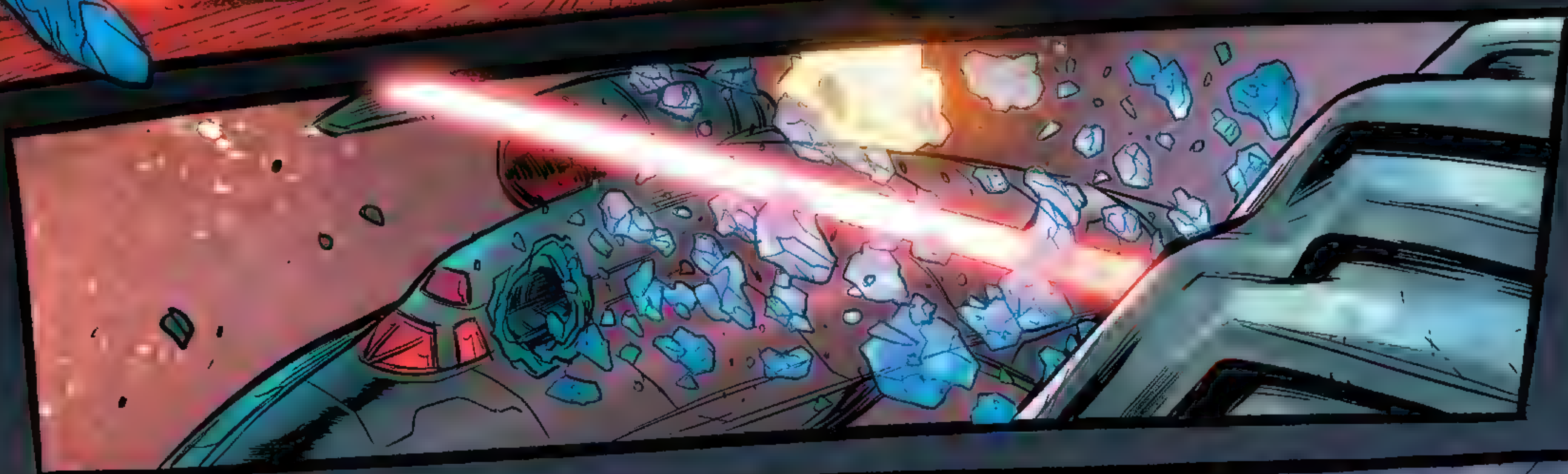
I'M MOVING AS FAST AS I CAN.

THESE TUNNELS WEREN'T MADE FOR SOMEONE MY SIZE.



CYCLOPS--MAKE A HOLE!

I CAN DO THAT.





WE SLIP AWAY.



BUT NOT SAFE.



THE POISONS... STILL HUNGRY...

N-NO!
GET...GET OFF!

...STILL SEEKING OUT KLYNTAR.



WHEN THEY TOUCH THEM...THEY KILL THE SYMBIOTE...

AAARGH!

...KILL THE HOSTS...



...UNLESS SACRIFICES ARE MADE.



I'M...
I'M SO SORRY.



SOMETIMES...



...THAT
MEANS
SACRIFICING
THE ONES
YOU LOVE.



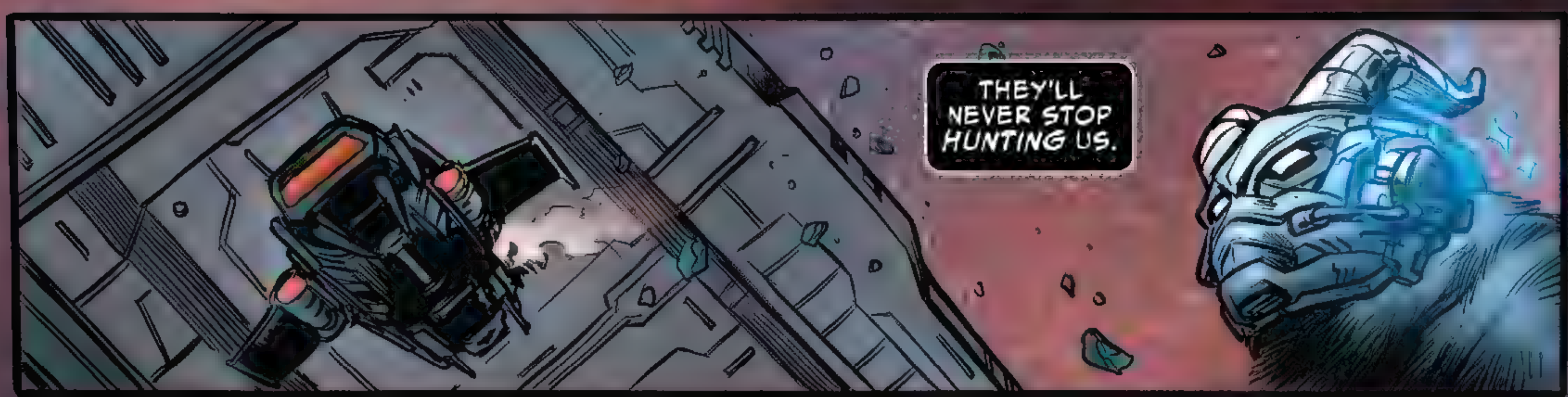
THOUGHT
WE COULD
BEAT THEM.



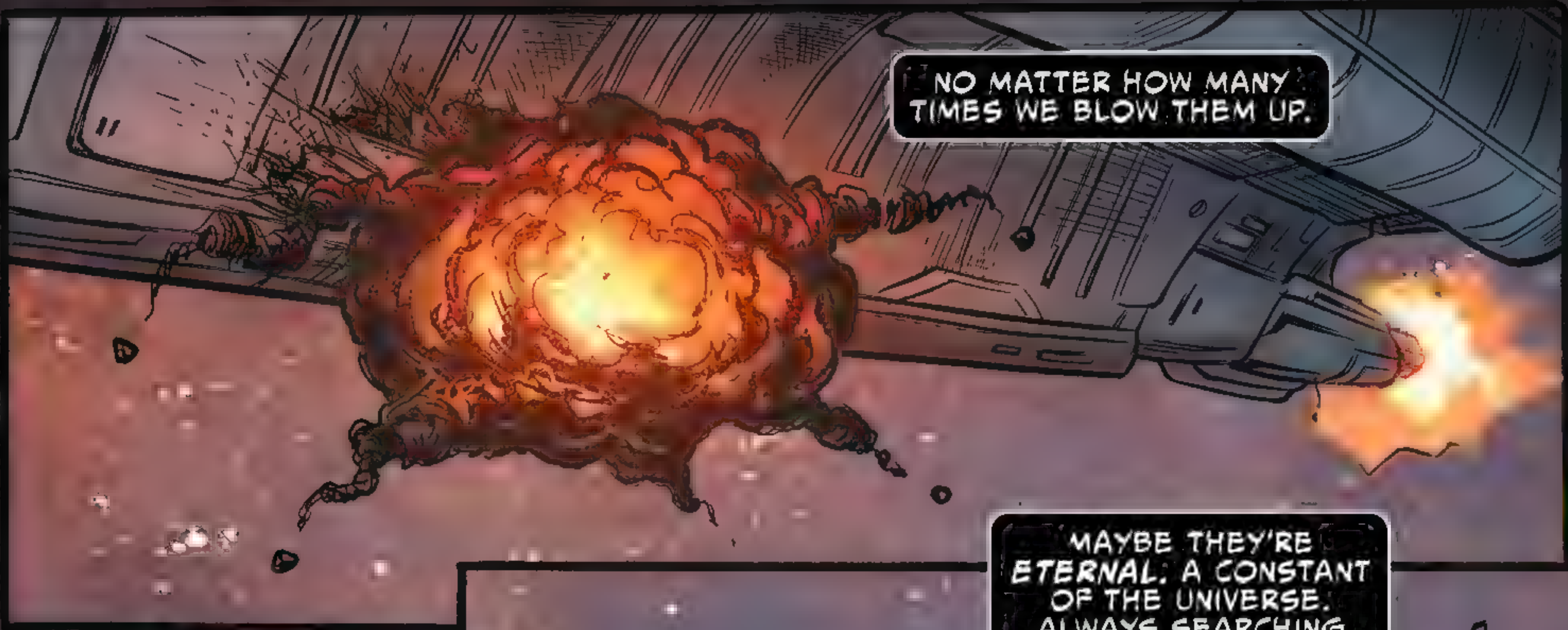
THOUGHT WE
DESTROYED ALL OF
THEM ON A
POISONED EARTH.



BUT, SOMEHOW
THEY FOLLOWED
US HOME.



THEY'LL
NEVER STOP
HUNTING US.



NO MATTER HOW MANY
TIMES WE BLOW THEM UP.



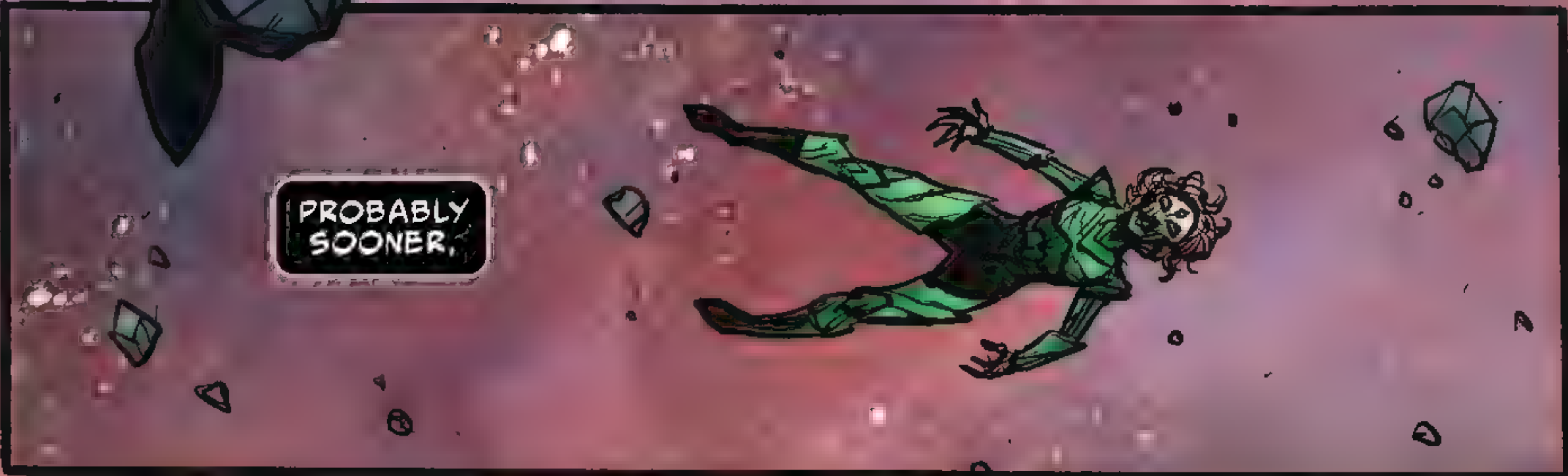
MAYBE THEY'RE
ETERNAL. A CONSTANT
OF THE UNIVERSE.
ALWAYS SEARCHING
FOR NEW WORLDS.



NEW PREY.



EVEN IF WE MAKE IT
HOME, SOONER OR LATER
THEY WILL FIND US AGAIN.



PROBABLY
SOONER.

KARITETH SPACEPORT.
ULGRIATH.

WILL YOU
BE ALL RIGHT,
SCOTT?

AFTER
EVERYTHING
THAT'S HAPPENED,
I HATE JUST
LEAVING
YOU--

I DON'T
KNOW THAT
THERE'S ANOTHER
CHOICE, DAD.

WE NEED
TO GET BACK
HOME.

THE X-MEN
MIGHT HAVE GIVEN UP
OUR SYMBIOTES, BUT WE'RE
STILL IN THE FIGHT. IF THOSE...
POISONS DECIDE TO HEAD TO
EARTH...WELL, I DON'T LIKE
TO THINK ABOUT WHAT
WE'LL BE FACING.



AND THE
STARJAMMERS NEED
TO GET THOSE SURVIVING
SYMBIOTES BACK TO
THEIR WORLD,
TOO.

THE
KLYNTAR
NEED TO BE
WARNED.

MAYBE THERE'S
SOME WAY TO GET
THEM TO SAFETY.



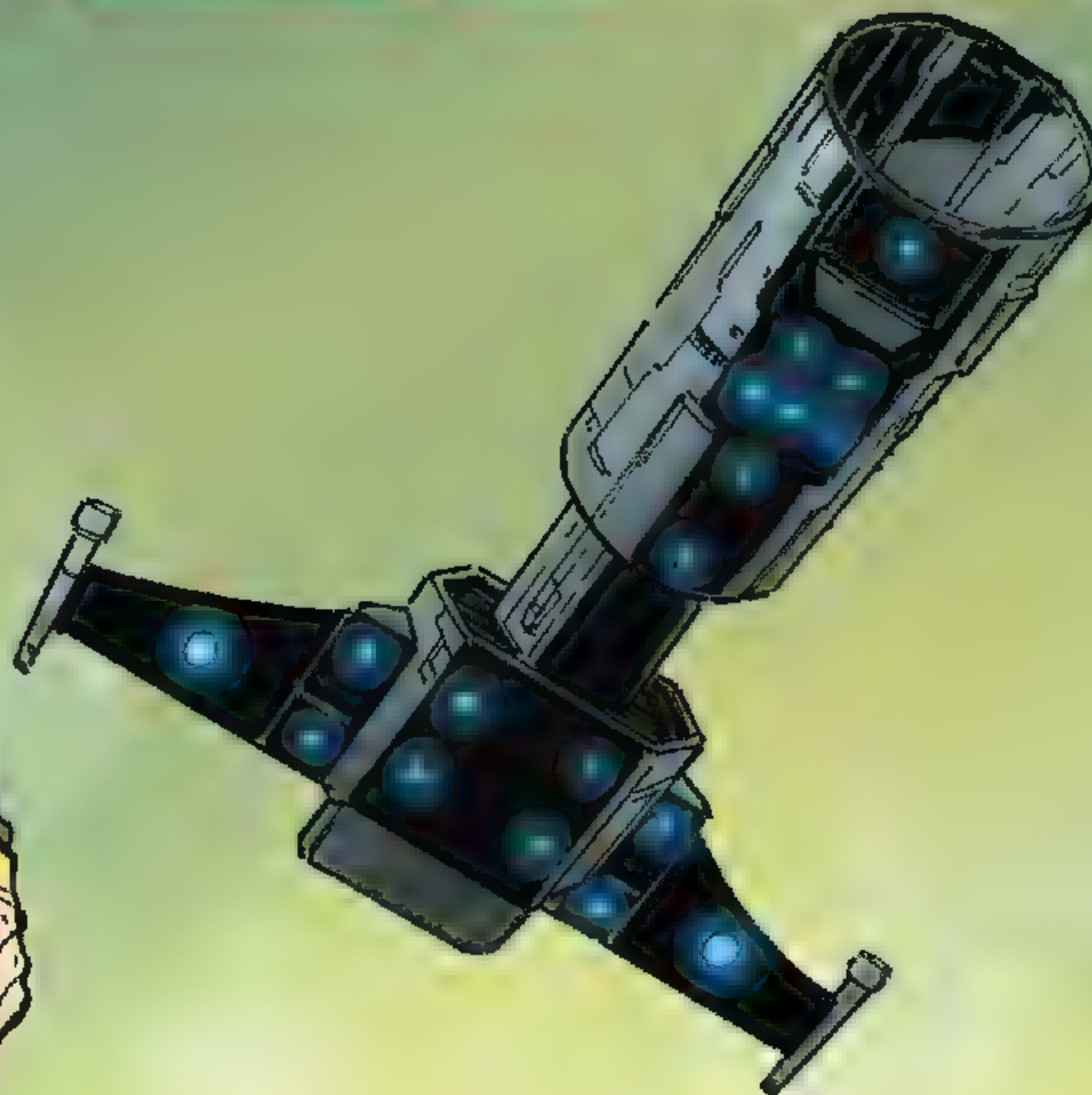
I'M
TRULY SORRY,
SON.

IF THE
X-MEN HADN'T
COME TO RESCUE
US...JEAN WOULD
BE...

DAD--
DON'T.



JEAN
WOULDN'T
HAVE HAD IT
ANY OTHER
WAY.





HATE TO RUSH YOU WHILE YOU'RE MOURNING, CYCLOPS. ANY OTHER SITUATION, MAYBE THERE'D BE TIME TO GRIEVE.

BUT THE POISONS AREN'T DONE WITH US.

WE DON'T GET BACK HOME, WE COULD BE DEALING WITH THE END OF THE WORLD.

FOR HIM, EDDIE, THE WORLD HAS ALREADY ENDED.



ALL RIGHT, X-MEN. SADDLE UP. LIKE IT OR NOT, IT'S A RACE BACK TO EARTH, AND WE'RE ALREADY LOSING.

YOU DON'T NEED TO REMIND US OF WHAT WE'VE LOST, VENOM.



SCOTT--

WHA--?!



YOU ALL RIGHT, KID?

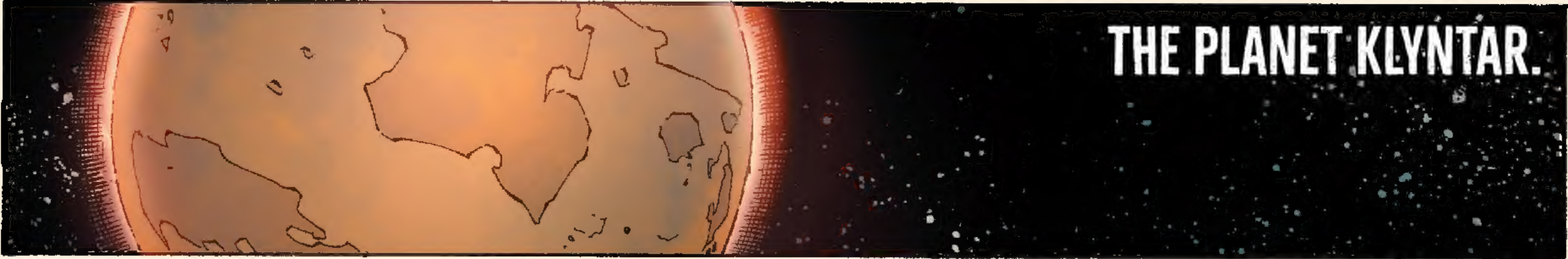
I'M...



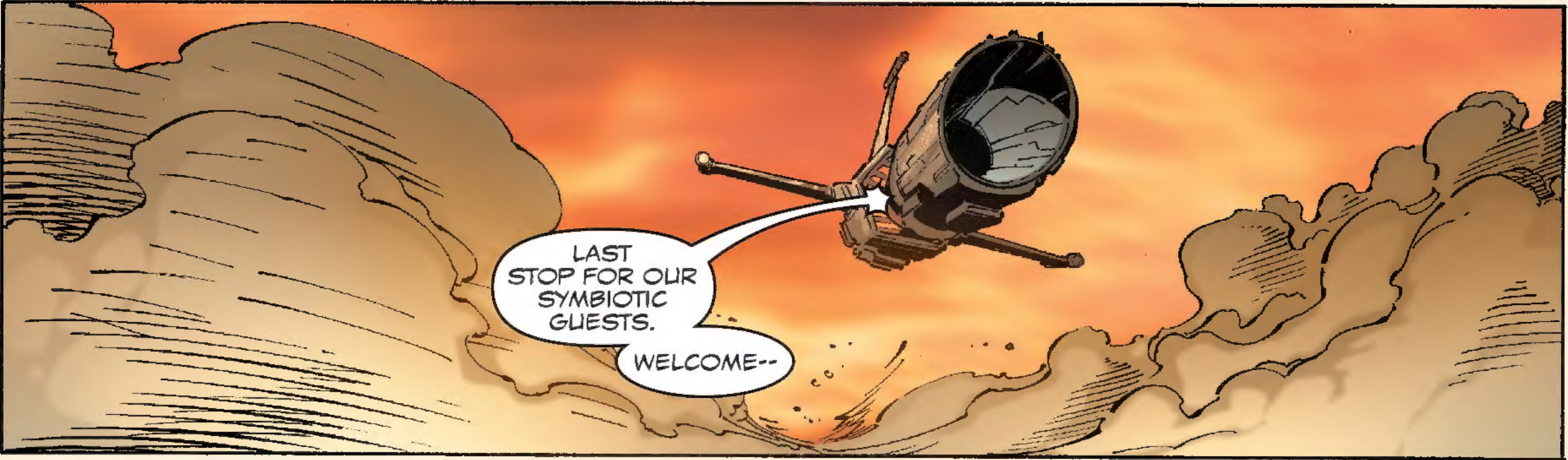
I'LL BE FINE.



...I'M JUST SEEING GHOSTS.

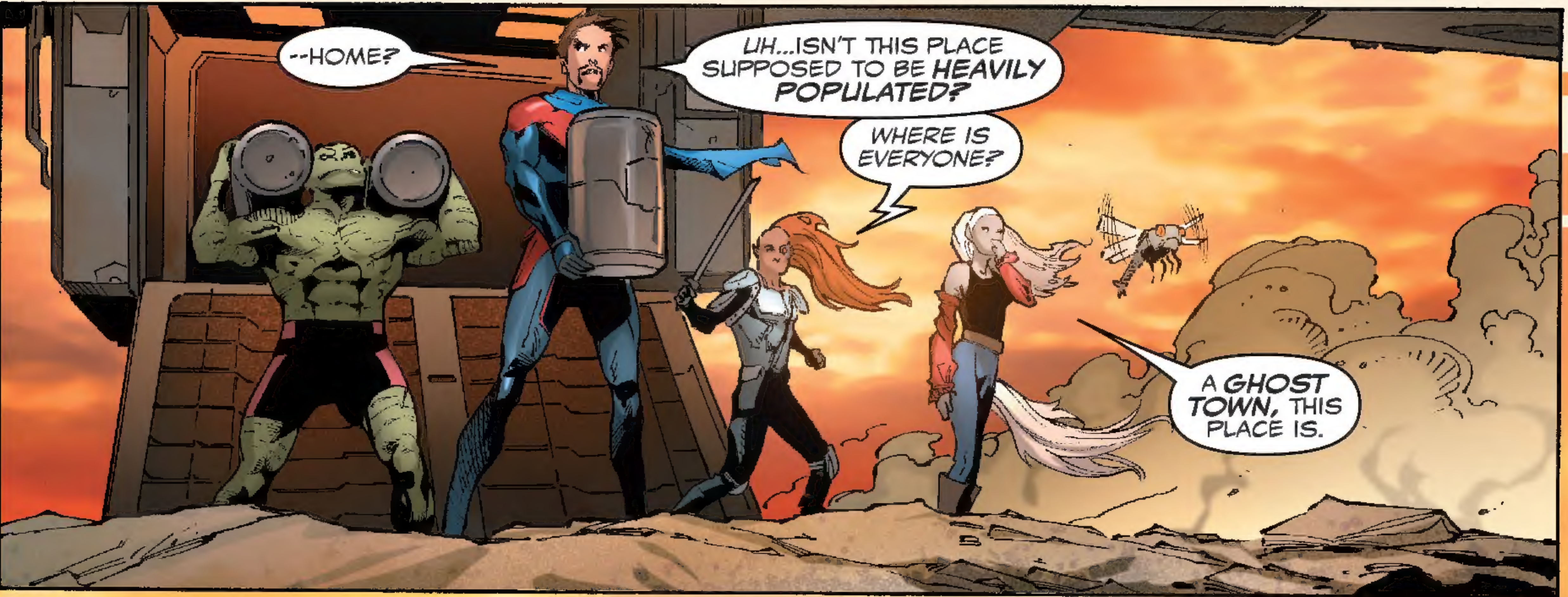


THE PLANET KLYNTAR.



LAST
STOP FOR OUR
SYMBIOTIC
GUESTS.

WELCOME--

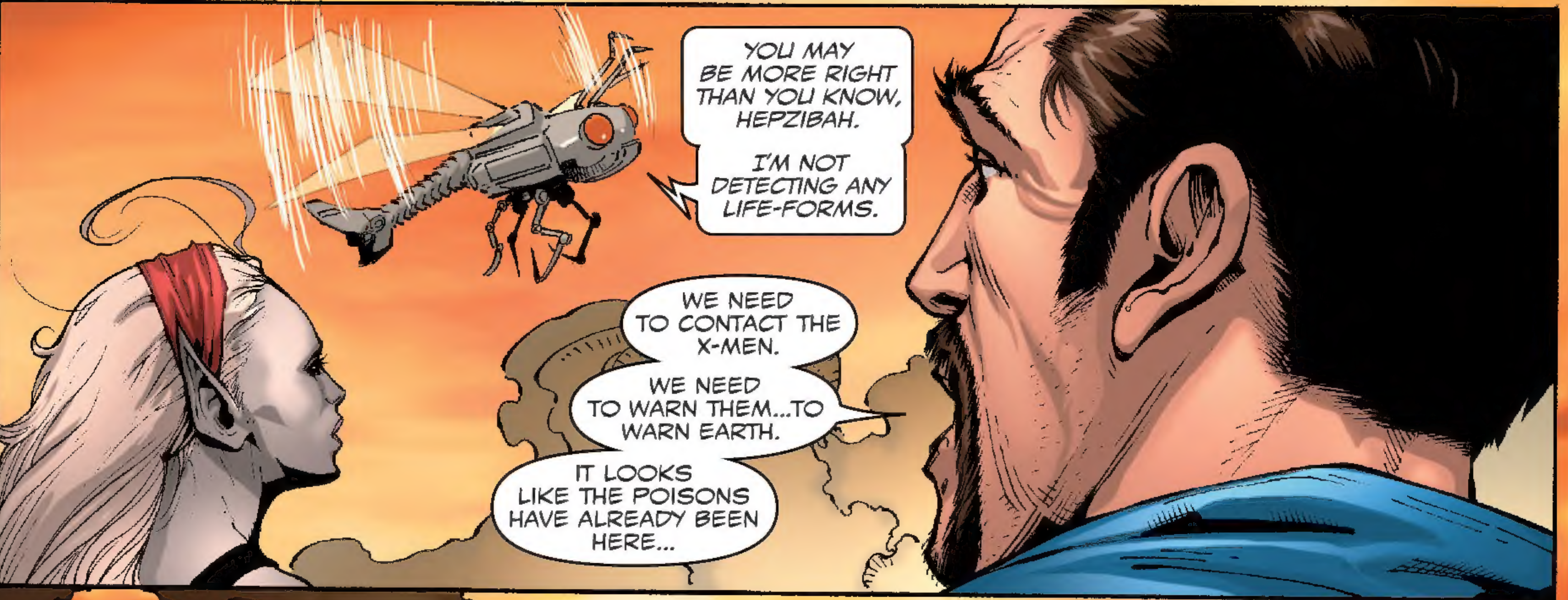


--HOME?

UH...ISN'T THIS PLACE
SUPPOSED TO BE HEAVILY
POPULATED?

WHERE IS
EVERYONE?

A GHOST
TOWN, THIS
PLACE IS.



YOU MAY
BE MORE RIGHT
THAN YOU KNOW,
HEPZIBAH.

I'M NOT
DETECTING ANY
LIFE-FORMS.

WE NEED
TO CONTACT THE
X-MEN.

WE NEED
TO WARN THEM...TO
WARN EARTH.

IT LOOKS
LIKE THE POISONS
HAVE ALREADY BEEN
HERE...

...AND
THEY'VE TAKEN ALL
THE KLYNTAR!

TO BE CONTINUED IN
VENOMIZED #1!



Eddie's Clubhouse

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The symbiotes have been KIDNAPPED?! But who or what could possibly be able to forcibly remove thousands of symbiotes from their home planet... and why?!

There's only one way to find out... KEEP READING VENOM!

Hello, Venomaniacs! Editor Devin Lewis reporting to you live and in print from Marvel HQ in the heart of New York, where it is WAY too cold. Today marks the 47th year of this endless winter, but as frigid as it's been outside, it's been RED-HOT on the shelves of your local comic shop if you're a VENOM fan.

First, your pals at the House of Ideas delivered VENOM INC., the first-ever official crossover between THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and VENOM! Featuring the return of Flash Thompson, Andi Benton and Lee Price, VENOM INC. ushered in a new era for Spider-Man, Venom and their supporting casts.

Then came POISON-X, the final issue of which you're holding in your hands RIGHT NOW! Another first-of-its-kind crossover, this time between VENOM and X-MEN! Unless you count "Tooth and Claw" from back in the day, which I DON'T, because Wolverine is not, in fact, a team of X-Men unto himself.

POISON-X also marks the first deliberate incursion of the deadly Poisons into the Marvel Universe--and while we've seen them interact with MU characters before (in both VENOMVERSE and the MONSTERS UNLEASHED epic "Lo, There Came a Poison!"), this comics mag represents the first time they've marched on the MU with an eye for conquest.

That might've been enough for the Distinguished Competition, but not for us, True Believers, because the epic final chapter in the saga that started with VENOMVERSE has just been announced--VENOMIZED! Reuniting your favorites and mine, Cullen Bunn, Iban Coello and Matt Yackey, VENOMIZED is a no-holds-barred slugfest with all of your favorite Marvel heroes getting caught in the fray. It kicks off next month, so don't miss it!



As eagle-eyed readers know, this year marks the 30th anniversary of Venom's first appearance, and we're hard at work on even more as-yet-unannounced stories that celebrate everything we all love about the Lethal Protector. Watch this space for more info!

But enough plugging! Let's get to your letters!

Dear Team VENOM,

I have to say how awesome it is to be emailing you guys! It's been a blast reading "Venom Inc."

When I first heard about the crossover I immediately went to my local comic shop to add it to my pull list. It's been great to read about my favorite Marvel characters in one comic. I never knew the symbiote was able to spread and control other people.

It's funny to see Venom playing nice with Spidey and the good guys.

Keep up the good work and can't wait to read Part 6 next week!!!

Justin

Thanks for reading, Justin, and for the kind words! We're thrilled you've been enjoying "Venom Inc." and hope the finale lives up to your expectations! Be sure to let us know what you think of that one with another letter!

I squealed when I saw in *Comic Shop News* that the first-ever THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and VENOM crossover was about to happen. I took a picture of the ALPHA cover and sent it to my fiancé. I just couldn't hide my excitement! Who are my top two all-time favorite comic characters, you ask? It's probably obvious!

"Venom Inc." is so good! I even managed to get one of the crazy-sweet Dell'Otto variant covers for the ALPHA and you can bet I'm getting the OMEGA cover, too! This crossover series is amazing to say the least! And you brought back Flash as Anti-Venom?!

Between the conclusion of "Venom Inc." and "Poison-X" around the corner, I'm a happy Dave! You guys certainly know how to Venomize the Marvel Universe! Venomize the world! Venom for life! My life was changed forever in the pages of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #300 when Eddie Brock obtained the symbiote and I've been on one heck of a journey ever since. Keep up the great work, guys!

Thank you for changing my life!
David C.

These kinds of letters really make our days here at the House of Ideas. I've said it before and I'll say it again, nothing makes us happier than knowing that you readers are enjoying the stories and series we publish! Thanks for reading, David, and for being a lifelong Venom fan! We hope you like what we've got in store for the sinister symbiote's birthday!

Hey VENOM team,

I just wanted to let you guys know that your work with Eddie and his "Other" has been exemplary! What with all the controversy that's been going on in the comics world these days it's good to see a book that cares about plot, character, good art and action! Seeing Mark Bagley doing Venom's slobbery jaws again is just icing on the cake! Thanks again for all the hard work!

Spencer

Thanks for reading, Spencer! And, if you liked "Marvelous" Mark Bagley's return to the pages of VENOM, be sure to check out VENOM #164 and #165--both on sale next month, with some of the coolest and craziest Mark Bagley Venom action I've ever seen! Be sure to check 'em out and let us know what you think!

Dear "Venom Inc." creative team,

Thank you so much for this crossover event. It's honestly one of the best stories I've read in a few years. Not only are you guys treating Eddie Brock right, but you're treating my favorite Venom, Flash Thompson, right as well! You guys rock for bringing both of them back into the spotlight! Also, I have a quick question that we are all dying to have answered: Will Flash Thompson be getting a new solo series? Again, thanks so much for everything you guys do!

Michael L.

Hi, Michael! Boy, you're not wrong, we do get that question about Flash quite often! We here at Spidey-Central are big fans of Flash's, too, so trust me when I say we've got big plans for him. Beyond

that, I can't say much, but, if Flash is a character who means a lot to you, so will the stories we have coming up from the Spider-Office this spring! KEEP READING!

Dear Eddie's Clubhouse,

I jumped back on board with #155, not having picked up a VENOM title in years. You see, I love the character, but one cannot afford every title that Marvel publishes (roll on, lottery win). I'm pleased I grabbed #155.

I have craved a Venom/Kraven encounter for decades. I know there have been prior encounters, but nothing quite like what we've seen in recent issues. However, thank you for giving the Venom/Kraven encounter a lot of depth. It'd be tempting, I'm sure, to have two characters duking it out nonstop. But even the greatest battles need to be enhanced with multi-dimensional characters, great dialogue and depth. I am glad to say that you have not disappointed me. Any chance of some romance for Eddie Brock? Lots of love to the team. Make Mine Marvel!

Stephen P.
Birmingham
United Kingdom

Well, you know what they say, Stephen--better late than never! Myself, I'm just glad you jumped back aboard the VENOM train with issue #155! Mike, Mark, Dono and Clayton certainly did terrific work on that LEGACY arc! Be sure to check your shop's longboxes, too, for the earlier issues of Mike's run, featuring some incredible work from artists Gerardo Sandoval, Tradd Moore and Paulo Siqueira. Not only does the first arc of the series set the stage for "Venom Inc." (which we hope you check out!)--but there are a couple of terrific standalone issues in the mix, as well as the arc that introduces the subterranean dinosaur community and sets the stage for Kraven's hunt in "Blood in the Water"!

We've teased the possibility of romance for Eddie, but he's never actually asked anybody out just yet. Maybe he's shy, or maybe there's a presence in his life that makes him less lonely already. Whatever the case may be, Eddie's love life (or lack thereof) is something we'll definitely be exploring in the coming months.

All right, readers! That's all the space we've got for this one! Be here in ONE MONTH, when both VENOM #164 and VENOMIZED #1 will be on sale!

Stay sharp!
Devin
@edevinlewis

